

**FINAL**

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**NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION**

**National Environmental Policy Act; Modification and Operation of Building 103 Michoud Assembly Facility in Support of Ares Upper Stage Tooling and Welding, Constellation Program**

**AGENCY:** National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

**ACTION:** Finding of No Significant Impact

**SUMMARY:** Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended (42 United States Code [U.S.C.] 4321 et seq.), the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Parts 1500 through 1508), and NASA's regulations (14 CFR Part 1216, Subpart 1216.3), and based on the analyses in the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has made a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) with respect to the Proposed Action. The Proposed Action is to modify Building 103 by adding a High Bay approximately 100 x 140 x 150(high) feet for the expressed purpose of housing two stations for vertical assembly welding, two stations for vertical barrel welding, and one station for vertical stacking for the Upper Stage Ares I Program at the Michoud Assembly Facility (MAF) in New Orleans, Louisiana. In addition to the expansion, MAF will also make minor modifications to Building 103, including Common Bulkhead Assembly and Bonding Facility, Robotic Weld Tool-1, 2, 3 Facility, Machine Center Facility, Common Bulkhead Clean Line, Avionics Integration, Test & Assembly, and Modifications for Reaction Control System Assembly.

**DATE:** September 2008

**ADDRESSES:** No comments were received on the Draft EA during the public review conducted August 11, 2008, through September 10, 2008. Following the public review, the Final EA was prepared.

To receive a copy of the Final EA, contact Ms. Donna L. Holland, Environmental Engineering and Occupational Health Office, NASA Marshall Space Flight Center, AS10, Marshall Space Flight Center, Alabama 35812, Phone (256) 544-7201, email: [Donna.L.Holland@nasa.gov](mailto:Donna.L.Holland@nasa.gov)

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## **SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:**

MAF is managed by NASA Marshall Space Flight Center located in Huntsville, Alabama. NASA is proposing to modify existing facilities at MAF to support NASA's Constellation Program mission, as addressed in detail in the EA.

The Ares Program is an integral component of the much larger NASA Constellation Program. NASA's Constellation Program, a family of new spacecraft, launchers, and associated hardware, would facilitate a variety of human and robotic missions, from International Space Station (ISS) re-supply to lunar and planetary landings. In compliance with NEPA, NASA prepared a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) that addressed impacts associated with the Constellation Program. The PEIS concluded with a Record of Decision that was fully executed on February 28, 2008. As such, the EA covering impacts from expansion of Building 103 is tiered from the PEIS in accordance with NASA and Council on Environmental Policy Rules and Regulations.

Specifically, under the Proposed Action (Preferred Alternative), Building 103 would be expanded to allow assembly of the Ares I vehicle. In addition, NASA would make minor modifications to approximately six other facilities in Building 103. The proposed modifications would involve upgrading utility and mechanical systems within the interior of the building.

The potential impacts that the Proposed Action would have on air quality and noise would be short-term and temporary, and are expected to be minor. Based on the type and condition of the habitat at and around the Building 103 site, the Proposed Action would have a minimal impact on wildlife. Building 103 has been determined as ineligible for the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and the Proposed Action would not affect other NRHP eligible or listed sites. Modification and operation of Building 103 under the Proposed Action would not require permanent personnel relocations or employee hires. Expenditures for construction-related materials and supplies would have a small, short-term, beneficial effect on the economy of the region.

Operation of Building 103 would increase energy consumption at MAF; however, the increase in energy demand would not overburden the energy utility system of the facility. Modification of Building 103 would temporarily increase traffic in the area during construction; however, the projected increase is not expected to significantly burden the road system at or around MAF.

Building 103 contains asbestos shingles and may contain lead-based paint (LBP). Asbestos and LBP management would be conducted by the MAF Environmental Engineering and Occupational Health Office during the modifications and operation of Building 103 in accordance with all applicable federal, state, local, and NASA regulations and policies.

The Proposed Action is not expected to result in adverse cumulative impacts to any resource based on their locations, schedules, and respectively low direct/indirect impact potentials.

Based on the findings of this EA, the Proposed Action would not have a significant impact on the quality of the human or natural environment and no mitigation measures have been determined necessary for the Proposed Action. As such, this EA supports a Finding of No Significant Impact for the Proposed Action.

David A. King  
Director  
George C. Marshall Space Flight Center  
National Aeronautics and Space Administration

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